Diet and Herbal Supplements Whilst Doing Hep C Treatment

Hep C treatment failure is not random or unlucky. There are always reasons.

December 6, 2021 By Greg Jefferys

The big concern that most people have about their Hep C treatment is the risk of relapse. That is the risk of the treatment failing. Hepatitis C treatments with the new drugs has a very high cure rate but a portion of all people treated do fail. The rate of failed Hep C treatments is between 3% and 5% depending on the genotype and other factors.

Hep C treatment failure is not random or unlucky. There are always reasons.

One of the most common reasons for the failure of treatment with the new drugs is when people take certain supplements during treatment that interfere with the new Hep C drugs actions.

Certain herbs and supplements cause the production of enzymes in the body that speed up the removal of the new Hep C drugs from the body, thus resulting in UNDER-DOSING (the opposite of over-dosing)

So the important thing to consider when doing Hep C treatment are these things called CYP Enzymes.

CYP Enzymes are produced by the liver to remove certain toxins, particularly drugs, from the blood. Certain herbs cause the liver to increase the production of the CYP enzymes (the enzymes that break down DAAs). This means certain herbs will speed up the rate that the Hep C medicine is removed from your body. This helps the virus survive and increases the chance of the treatment failing.

We don’t know all the herbs that have this effect so its wise to avoid all herbs during treatment. Once the Hep C treatment is complete going onto a herbal program to help the liver regenerate is fine. Many people report milk thistle to have been helpful.

Energy Drinks

Energy Drinks such as Red Bull and other brands contain high levels of caffeine and another stimulant called Taurine. Taurine will also stimulate production of CYP enzymes and so Energy drinks should be avoided.

Herbal Supplements During Hepatitis C Treatment

High levels of these CYP enzymes can also be caused by some drugs and herbal supplements, particularly St John's Wort. It is wise to avoid any and all herbal supplements while doing Hepatitis C treatment

Food and Hepatitis C Treatment

There are no common foods that cause any problematic interactions. There is something of a myth going around that food like grapefruit, papaya and so on should be avoided. This is not entirely correct.

The reason behind this myth is that certain fruits will slightly suppress production of the CYP enzymes (the enzymes that break down DAAs). What this means is that by eating these foods while doing Hep C treatment the DAAs will remain active in the blood a little longer, which is probably not a bad thing.

To put this simply and in perspective the half-life of DAAs in your blood is about 20 minutes. That means that if your body absorbs 400 mg of a DAA 20 minutes later there will be only 200 mg After 40 minutes there will be about 100 mg and after an hour about 50 mg.

If you were to eat several grapefruit or a couple of papaya the effect might be that at the end of an hour you might have 60 or 70 mg left instead of 50 mg… its not a problem. You would need to eat about several grapefruit to make any real significant difference.

Taking other medication while doing Hepatitis C Treatment.

If you are on other medication you should check with your doctor to make sure there are no clashes between the Hep C medication and your other medicines. If you want to check for yourself there is a very good website which has an interactive chart that lists all Hep C medicines and other medications and you can check you medicine on this. Here is the link:

https://hep-druginteractions.org/checker

Summary

Whilst taking any DAA to treat Hepatitis C a sensible diet containing fresh fruit and vegetables is the main requirement. Avoid supplements of any kind during treatment.

Once treatment is complete then, if you use particular herbal or vitamin supplements, then you can resume.

To give your liver the best chance to heal the healthy diet combined with regular exercise is the best path to follow.

Given a chance your liver will be able to completely heal from the damage done by Hep C.

Greg’s blog is reprinted with permission, and the views are entirely his.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/blog/diet-herbal-supplements-whilst-hep-c-treatment